

SENATOR HEFNER: Mr. President and members of the body, I rise to oppose this bill as amended, and the reason I am opposing it because I feel that the system we have now is working well and why change it. Now an employee has to wait seven to ten weeks and I am sure when they bring their case before the Department of Labor that the Department of Labor would allow them to collect unemployment comp at the end of seven weeks, which, of course, is only fair. And, of course, if we pass this bill, it will cost the employer more and right now I don't think that the employer can afford to pay more. This bill says, if an employee leaves his or her place of employment for a better job, then after a week disqualification period they can collect. I say and I submit to you that I believe that this is a chance that the employee should take. He should weigh the good and the bad about accepting a better job. He should check in to see how long he will be employed. The unemployment compensation fund is dropping at the present time. I don't know exactly how much we have in it but it is less than it was at the beginning of the year. I say to you, what do we do when the well runs dry? You know what we do. We just slap an extra percentage point onto the amount of wages that the employer pays and I don't think that the employer can afford to pay anymore at the present time. I feel that we should tighten up our unemployment compensation laws instead of loosening at this present time. I think that we would be turning our unemployment fund into a welfare fund and I don't think we should be doing that. Employers would be picking up the tab instead of all the taxpayers. I think if these people or these employees need to go on welfare, well then the tab should be paid by all the taxpayers. Therefore, I would urge you to oppose this bill.

PRESIDENT: The Chair recognizes Senator Doyle.

SENATOR DOYLE: Mr. President and members of the body, I rise in support of LB 432. The way I read 432 as proposed is that what we are doing, we are setting out another area of definition. Perhaps it was unfortunate that this particular amendment was included within the section that deals with leaving voluntarily without good cause because, in fact, when you read the amendment to the bill which says that the employment which is taken shall be previously secured employment, it shall be permanent, full-time employment and the committee statement of intent also indicates that it can be reasonably expected to be permanent employment, it seems to me we are no longer dealing with a condition, a situation where an